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**FERNALD AND THE NATIONAL
ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT FERNALD
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PROJECT
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FACTSHEET**

FERNALD AND THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT

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FERNALD

Environmental Management Project

INTRODUCTION

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is the federal law that sets basic policy on protecting the environment. The principal purpose of NEPA is to require that federal agencies consider the environmental impacts of their actions. NEPA requires federal agencies to evaluate all environmental impacts prior to taking actions.

Why Do a NEPA Analysis?

There are several regulatory requirements for the analysis of potential impacts at Fernald. In addition, the U.S. Department of Energy has ordered compliance with NEPA at its sites.

Integration at Fernald

Fernald has a plan that integrates NEPA activities with those being conducted under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA), or Superfund. Under this plan, impacts will be evaluated at two levels:

- ☐ The general intensity and extent of impacts from actions on a site-wide basis
- ☐ The magnitude of the potential impacts associated with actions within each operable unit, or study area

The NEPA evaluation is being conducted in conjunction with the Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study activities proceeding under CERCLA. The NEPA information analyzing impacts is being prepared as an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or Environmental Assessment (EA).

At Fernald, a "lead" EIS/EA will be incorporated into the first operable unit feasibility study to be completed. The first is Operable Unit 4, and it is scheduled to be issued September 10, 1993. The lead EIS/EA will present operable unit-specific, site-wide, and cumulative impacts. These impact analyses can be updated, as necessary, in each subsequent operable unit NEPA analysis.

Potential Impacts

Under NEPA, a wide range of activities are evaluated to determine potential impacts. They include:

- Air quality
- Noise
- Groundwater
- Soils/geological
- Aquatic
- Terrestrial
- Flood plains, wetlands
- Threatened/endangered species
- Public health
- Worker health
- Transportation
- Historic/archaeological
- Socioeconomic
- Land Use
- Commitment of raw materials
- Commitment of lands
- Use of resources
- Off-site disposal issues
- Cumulative impacts
- Long-term nature of impacts

Site-Wide Characterization Report

The Site-Wide Characterization Report (SWCR) contains some information from the NEPA analysis at Fernald.

The SWCR is the primary source for detailed, site-specific and regional factors such as air quality, geology, soils, etc.

It also contains the NEPA analysis of the "no action" alternative.

Public Involvement Under NEPA

The public will have 45 days to comment on the NEPA information contained in the feasibility study reports. The U.S. Department of Energy will address those comments when it prepares the draft Record of Decision documents.

Other public involvement, or "scoping," is required under NEPA. The scoping ensures that real problems are identified early, concentrates energies and effort on those areas requiring resolution and provides for a balanced and thorough EIS/EA.

There were two scoping meetings for the OU4 EIS. The first was held June 12, 1990 at Ross High School and the second was held June 13, 1990 at Forest Park High School. Transcripts of those meetings, as well as related reports, are available in the Public Environmental Information Center, located in the JAMTEK Building, 10845 Hamilton-Cleves Highway, Harrison, Ohio 45030.

Comments were received from seven organizations, two government agencies and four individuals during the two scoping meetings. From these comments, about 200 issues were categorized and summarized.

For more information about this topic or about other Fernald activities and issues, contact the Office of Public Information, DOE Fernald Field Office, at (513) 648-3131.